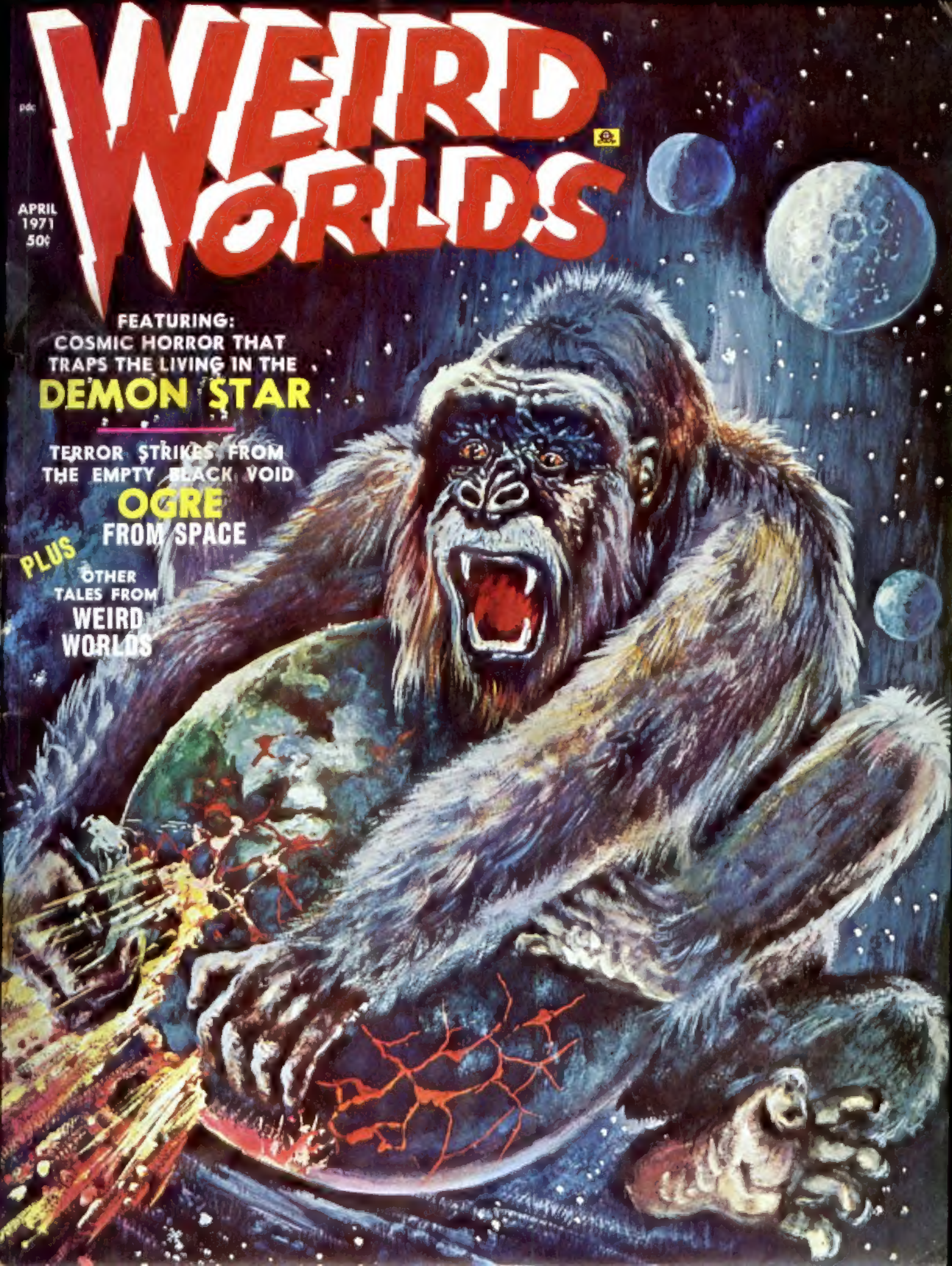
WEIRD WORLDS

APRIL
1971
50¢



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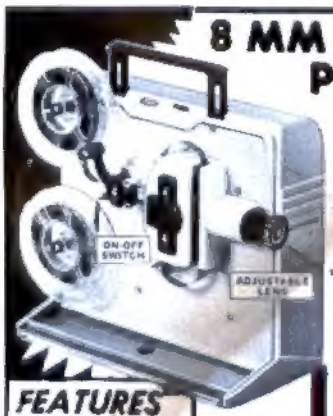

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WEIRD WORLDS

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CARL BURGOS, Editor **IRVING FASS**, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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THE DEMON STAR

THE SPACESHIP CONTINUED ITS RELENTLESS COURSE INTO THE GRINNING *JAWS OF DEATH*! THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK... AND THEN THE TONGUES OF FLAME LASHED OUT TO ENGULF THE CRAFT...

WHAT WAS THE THOUGHT OF EACH MAN AS HE FACED HIS HORRIBLE END?

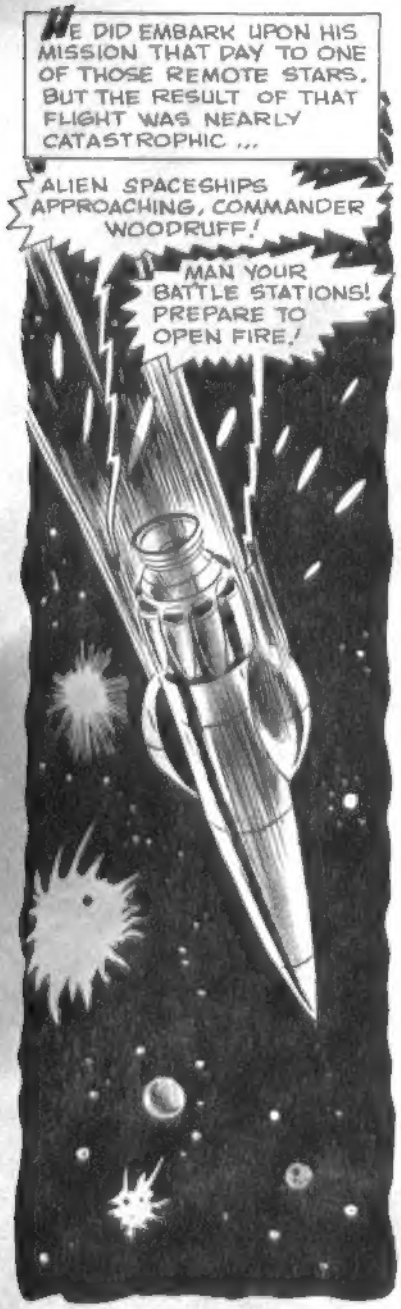
IN THE YEAR 2253 A SPACESHIP OF THE GALACTIC FLEET WAS HURTLING THROUGH THE COSMOS TO INVESTIGATE A REPORT THAT ONE OF THE STARS WAS ABOUT TO BECOME A SUPER NOVA.

COMMANDER BEN WOODRUFF, THE LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION, WAS DISLIKED BY MOST OF HIS MEN BECAUSE OF HIS DISCIPLINARY ATTITUDE. BUT WOODRUFF WAS A MOST MISUNDERSTOOD MAN... HE NEVER SPOKE OF HIS RESTLESS, DISCONTENTED SOUL WHICH DROVE HIM ONWARD IN THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS...

AS THE SHIP DRONED ON, WOODRUFF RECALLED THAT FATEFUL NIGHT WHEN HE BADE FAREWELL TO WENDRA ...
BEN... YOU'RE SHIPPING OUT!?! HOW CAN YOU LEAVE ME AT A TIME LIKE THIS? THE BABY WILL ARRIVE IN A FEW WEEKS! OH, BEN, I NEED YOU SO ...
I'M SORRY, WENDRA, I'VE GOT TO GO!

BUT I NEED YOU, BEN! OH, DARLING, EVER SINCE I KNEW YOU, YOU'VE BEEN DISCONTENTED AND RESTLESS! WHY DO YOU CONTINUALLY GO BACK INTO DEEP SPACE?
I DON'T KNOW, WENDRA ... PERHAPS A PLACE WHERE A MAN'S SOUL CAN FIND TRANQUILITY IS SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, AMONG THE STARS!

IT DOESN'T EXIST! AREN'T YOU SATISFIED HERE WITH ME?
WENDRA, I LOVE YOU MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF! BUT I'VE GOT TO GO BACK ONCE MORE... THEN OUR LIVES WILL BE FILLED WITH HAPPINESS!


HE DID EMBARK UPON HIS MISSION THAT DAY TO ONE OF THOSE REMOTE STARS. BUT THE RESULT OF THAT FLIGHT WAS NEARLY CATASTROPHIC ...
ALIEN SPACESHIPS APPROACHING, COMMANDER WOODRUFF!
MAN YOUR BATTLE STATIONS! PREPARE TO OPEN FIRE!

DURING THE BATTLE, ONE OF THE REAR ROCKETS WAS BLASTED OUT BY ENEMY FIRE ...

COMMANDER WOODRUFF HIMSELF DONNED A SPACE SUIT AND WENT OUT TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE ... BUT WAS SUDDENLY ATTACKED BY A HORDE OF ALIEN SPACE MEN FROM THE OTHER SHIPS ...

"FIVE YEARS AGO, COMMANDER WOODRUFF HEADED UPAN EXPEDITION TO ARCTURUS. IT WAS MY FIRST TRIP IN SPACE, AND I MADE ALL THE MISTAKES IN THE BOOK. BUT MY WORST MISTAKE WAS TO WANDER OFF ON MY OWN... I WAS ATTACKED BY ONE OF THE MOST HORRIBLE CREATURES IMAGINABLE! THREE MEN DIED ATTEMPTING TO RESCUE ME... BUT BEN WOODRUFF DIDN'T GIVE UP! HE HACKED THE THING WITH HIS SPACE AXE UNTIL IT DIED!"

"ANOTHER TIME, ON GANIMEDE, WE WERE FORCED TO CHOOSE A MEMBER OF OUR CREW TO FIGHT A DEFORMED GIANT. THE COMMANDER INSISTED ON FACING THE MONSTER ALONE! HE WOULDN'T LET ANY OF US RISK OUR LIVES! HE DEFEATED THE GIANT TOO!"

OKAY, SO HE ISN'T A COWARD! BUT WHY DOES HE KEEP RIDING US? WHY DOESN'T HE ACT HUMAN FOR A CHANGE?
CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S EATING HIS HEART OUT FOR HIS WIFE? HE HAS TO PUT ON A FRONT... OR HE'LL CRACK UP!

YES, HE WAS THINKING OF HIS WIFE... HE WAS THINKING OF THAT EVENTFUL DAY THREE YEARS AGO... WHEN HE RETURNED FROM A LONG VOYAGE AND WAS WELCOMED BY WENDRA... HE REALIZED HOW LONELY HE HAD BEEN DURING THOSE ENDLESS MONTHS IN SPACE! HE HAD PROMISED HIMSELF THEN AND THERE HE WOULD NEVER GO BACK!
OH, BEN... PLEASE... NEVER LEAVE ME AGAIN...
NEVER... NEVER!

FOR ONE YEAR, HE WAS HAPPY AND CONTENTED WITH HIS WIFE... HE HAD ALL THAT AN ORDINARY MAN COULD DESIRE... BUT THEN, COMMANDER BEN WOODRUFF WAS NO ORDINARY MAN!
BEN, IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN... HASN'T IT? YOU'VE GOT THE WANDERLUST ONCE MORE... I SEE IT IN YOUR EYES...
WENDRA... I CAN'T EXPLAIN... BUT I'VE GOT TO GO BACK JUST ONCE MORE!

OH, BEN, PLEASE DON'T GO! I CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF LOSING YOU AGAIN!
PLEASE, WENDRA, DON'T MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR ME! IT WON'T BE FOR LONG... AND THIS TIME I'M SURE I'LL FIND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!

MISFORTUNE CONTINUALLY DOGGED THE PATH OF COMMANDER WOODRUFF... HIS SHIP WAS ATTACKED BY A TITANIC ENTITY FROM A DARK AND DISTANT WORLD!

BY SWIFT ACTION, THE CREW HAD MANAGED TO ESCAPE DISASTER THAT DAY UNDER COMMANDER WOODRUFF'S DIRECTION, THE CREATURE WAS BLASTED TO COSMIC DUST!

COMMANDER! OUR VIEWS OF "STAR X" REVEAL A SUDDEN INTENSITY OF COMBUSTION! IT IS TURNING INTO A NOVA! IT'S GONNA BLOW... AND WE'RE RIGHT IN IT'S PATH!
WHAT!?! REVERSE ROCKETS IMMEDIATELY!
ATTENTION, ALL CREWMEN! NOW HEAR THIS! EVERY MAN AT HIS STATION AT ONCE! DECELERATE THE SHIP... OPEN UP ALL ROCKETS! WE'LL NEED ALL THE FIRE-POWER WE CAN MUSTER TO OUT RACE THIS HOT GLOBE!
THE COMMANDER'S ORDERS WERE QUICKLY CARRIED OUT, BUT TO NO AVAIL...
SIR! THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL OF THE STAR HAS INCREASED A HUNDRED-FOLD! THE ROCKETS HAVE NO EFFECT!
WE'VE GOT TO REVERSE OUR POSITION!
IN SPITE OF THE HERCULEAN EFFORTS OF THE CREW TO TURN THE SHIP ABOUT, THE MIGHTY VESSEL CONTINUED ITS RELENTLESS COURSE, RIGHT TOWARD THE MAW OF THE SUPER NOVA...
THE STAR IS EXPANDING IN SIZE! THIS HEAT IS UNBEARABLE!
DON'T LOSE YOUR HEADS! EACH MAN DON HIS SPACE SUIT! WE'LL HAVE TO ABANDON SHIP!
THE MEN WERE QUICK TO OBEY BEN'S ORDER, BUT THE UTTER FUTILITY OF THE EFFORT BECAME APPARENT...
THE FLAMES ARE COMING TOWARD US! THEY'LL SWALLOW THE SHIP! WE CAN'T ESCAPE!
WE'LL ALL DIE!

PANIC GRIPPED EVERY MAN ON BOARD THAT ILL-FATED SHIP AS A TONGUE OF FLAME REACHED OUT TO ENGULF THE CRAFT IN AN EMBRACE OF *DEATH* ...

BUT AN INSTANT BEFORE CONTACT...
WENDRA! WENDRA! FORGIVE ME FOR THE PAIN AND ANGUISH I'VE CAUSED YOU! YOU WERE RIGHT, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW! *I DIDN'T KNOW!*

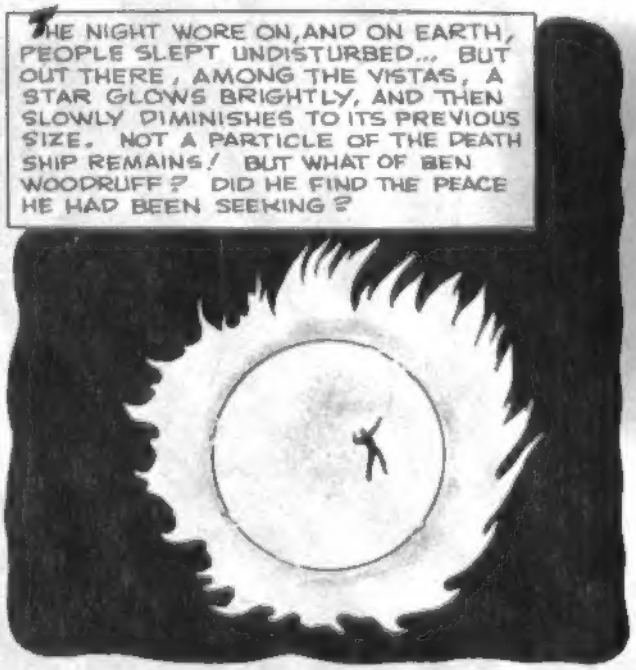
AND THEN THE TERRIBLE ENVELOPE OF DEATH STRUCK! THE STEEL STRUCTURE COLLAPSED AND CONDENSED INTO A WHITE-HOT STEAM! THE MAGAZINES EXPLODED AND THE CREWMEN OF THE DEATH SHIP WERE FLUNG OUT AMONG THE COSMOS ...

NOT A SINGLE MEMBER OF THE CREW ESCAPED DEATH FROM THAT AWFUL HALOCAUST!

AND, AT THAT MOMENT BACK ON EARTH, WENDRA AWOKE FROM SLUMBER, SHOUTING HYSTERICALLY...
BEN! BEN!

WHERE ARE YOU?

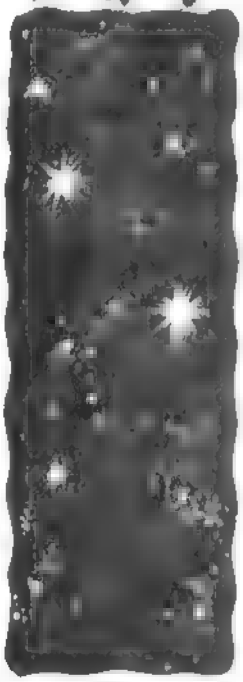
HE'S DEAD! I KNOW HE'S DEAD! OH, BEN... HOW CAN I GO ON WITHOUT YOU?!?


THE NIGHT WORE ON, AND ON EARTH, PEOPLE SLEPT UNDISTURBED... BUT OUT THERE, AMONG THE VISTAS, A STAR GLOWS BRIGHTLY, AND THEN SLOWLY DIMINISHES TO ITS PREVIOUS SIZE. NOT A PARTICLE OF THE DEATH SHIP REMAINS! BUT WHAT OF BEN WOODRUFF? DID HE FIND THE PEACE HE HAD BEEN SEEKING?

IT WAS A "THING" THAT CAME OUT OF THE DARKNESS OF THE BEYOND! WAS IT FROM THIS WORLD OR THE NEXT.. CHARLES DIDN'T KNOW. HE ONLY KNEW HE LOOKED THROUGH HIS TELESCOPE AND "IT" WAS THERE... THE CREATURE HE HAD BROUGHT THERE ON THE WINGS OF HIS THOUGHT... AND WHEN "IT" LEFT, IT WOULD TAKE HIM WITH IT!

The OGRE FROM SPACE

CHARLES LATHAM WAS AN ECCENTRIC YOUNG SCIENTIST WHO MIXED STUDIES OF SCIENCE AND ASTRONOMY WITH ANCIENT BOOKS ON ASTROLOGY AND THE OCCULT! HE HAD AN IDEA THAT A "SUPER MIND" COULD CONTACT BEINGS ON OTHER PLANETS OR IN OTHER WORLDS...



WHEN I ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE CREATURES ON OTHER PLANETS, I'LL LEARN SECRETS THAT'LL MAKE ME THE MOST POWERFUL MAN ON EARTH!
I'M FED UP WITH YOU AND YOUR SCREWBALL IDEAS! I'M GETTING OUT!

YOU MUSTN'T GO, FLORA! TONIGHT ALL THE INTELLE-GENCES OF THE STARS ARE FAVORABLE FOR CONTACT!
BAH!

THIS ASTRO-WAVE MACHINE THAT I INVENTED IS PICKING UP VIBRATIONS FROM OUTER SPACE! SINCE ITS "BRAIN" PICKS UP ONLY THOUGHT WAVES... I HAVE REACHED BEINGS WHO CAN THINK!
YOU INSANE IDIOT! LET ME GO!

DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT IT MEANS? ALL I HAVE TO DO IS TO PULL THOSE THOUGHTS OUT OF SPACE THROUGH MY MACHINE! THEN MY OWN BRAIN WILL RECEIVE THEM FROM THE MACHINE!

CHARLES TURNED TOWARD HIS MACHINE...
BY CONCENTRATING MY OWN THOUGHTS INTO THE BRAIN OF THE MACHINE, I CAN SEND THEM INTO SPACE JUST AS I PULL THOUGHTS INTO MY MACHINE! THERE ARE NO LANGUAGE BARRIERS IN THOUGHT WAVES... WHY, I MIGHT EVEN CONTROL THE SPHERES!
YOU'RE A MADMAN!

SUDDENLY...
FLORA! NO!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU AND YOUR MACHINE!

IN AN INSANE FURY, CHARLES SPRINGS.
MY MACHINE. Y-YOU...!
NO! AARRGHH!

SHE'S DEAD! SHE NEVER REALIZED SHE MARRIED A MAN WHOSE POWER WOULD ONE DAY STRETCH BEYOND INFINITY!

I'LL HAVE TO START ALL OVER AGAIN! AND I'M POSITIVE I WAS ABOUT TO MAKE MY FIRST REAL CONTACT WITH THE BEYOND THOUGHT WAS COMING OUT OF SPACE!

I WONDER WHICH PLANET I WAS REACHING? BY NOW I WOULD HAVE KNOWN SECRETS NO MAN HAS EVER KNOWN BEFORE

WHY, I MIGHT HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ONE OF THE GREAT MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE!
HEH! HEH! I GOT HERE BEFORE YOUR MACHINE WAS SMASHED, CHARLES. THE BEAM DREW ME RIGHT TO YOU!

AS CHARLES LATHAM PUT HIS EYES TO THE TELESCOPE, HE RECEIVED AN UNSPOKEN MESSAGE...
LET ME IN CHARLES!
NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE!

W-WHAT HORRIBLE THING ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANT YOU CHARLES. WE HAVE BEEN AS INTERESTED IN GETTING THROUGH TO EARTH AS YOU HAVE BEEN IN TRYING TO CONTACT WHAT LIES BEYOND EARTH! AND NOW, WITH YOUR HELP...I AM HERE.

NOT IN ALL HIS SPECULATION HAD CHARLES DREAMED THAT SUCH A CREATURE COULD EXIST...
HOW-HOW DID YOU GET HERE? HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
YOUR MACHINE'S ELECTRONIC BRAIN PULLED ME OUT OF SPACE! THERE ARE MANY OF US OUT THERE, ONLY I HAPPENED TO CATCH THE RIGHT BEAM!
YOU WERE RIGHT IN YOUR BELIEF THAT THOUGHT SURMOUNTS ALL LANGUAGE BARRIERS AND SPACE! RIGHT NOW I AM NOT SPEAKING TO YOU... YOU ARE FEELING MY THOUGHT WAVES... AND FROM YOUR BRAIN I AM DRAWING ALL THAT YOU KNOW!
THE HYPNOTIC GLARE SEEMED TO GO THROUGH CHARLES LIKE AN ELECTRIC SHOCK!
STOP! I-I... THE PAIN... Y-YOU ARE PULLING MY BRAIN APART!
NO, CHARLES! THAT WILL COME LATER WHEN I TAKE YOU BACK WITH ME! THEN WE WILL TAKE YOU APART SO THAT WE MAY BUILD OURSELVES SIMILAR BODIES!
RIGHT NOW, THIS FORM THAT HAS BEEN MINE FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS WOULD NOT LAST MORE THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!
SO WE MUST REASSEMBLE YOUR MACHINE... THEN WHEN WE LEAVE, WE'LL BEAM IT SO THAT WE FROM BEYOND CAN COME BACK AND FORTH UNTIL WE MAKE THIS EARTH OUR OWN AND THE INHABITANTS OUR SLAVES!
RUSHING FROM HIS OBSERVATORY-LAB, CHARLES SLAMMED THE DOOR BEHIND HIM...
THAT CREATURE MUST BE NUTS TO THINK I'D REBUILD THAT MACHINE TO SEAL MY OWN DOOM!
IT CAN'T EXIST ON EARTH IN ITS PRESENT FORM MORE THAN A DAY! I'M SAFE IF I CAN KEEP IT IN THE LAB FOR 24 HOURS!

I NEED A DRINK...THIS NIGHT HAS BEEN A BAD DREAM... FIRST FLORA. I KILLED HER...AND SHE WAS RIGHT! I WAS CRAZY TO FOOL AROUND WITH THAT MACHINE!

AS SOON AS IT'S SAFE TO GO BACK TO MY LAB I-I'LL GET RID OF FLORA'S BODY! I'LL TELL EVERYONE SHE LEFT ME! GUESS IT'LL BE SAFE TO WAIT 24 HOURS! OH...MY HEAD!

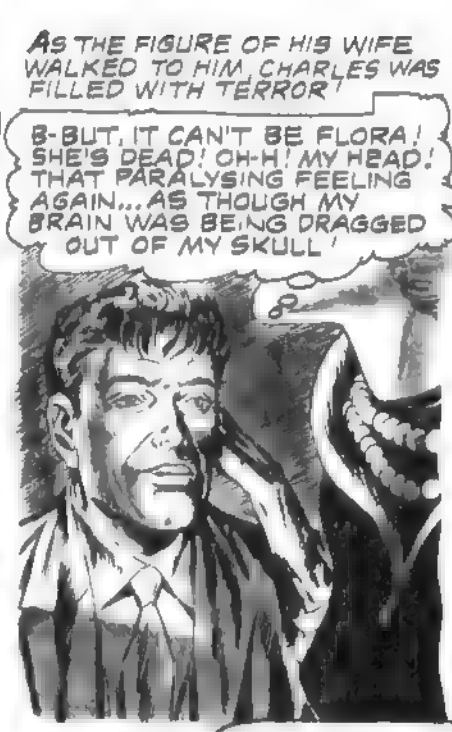
THAT'S FUNNY! NOW THE PAIN IN MY HEAD HAS GONE! AND THERE'S THE TAVERN! I NEVER THOUGHT I'D ACTUALLY WANT TO BE WITH THE PEOPLE WHO HANG OUT THERE...
I'LL SEE YOU IN A FEW MINUTES, CHARLES!

INSIDE, HIDING HIS FEARS...
WELL, PROF. LATHAM! WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE YOU IN THIS JOINT!
YOUR WIFE IS ONE OF OUR BEST CUSTOMERS, BUT WE ALWAYS FIGURE YOU'RE TOO BUSY LOOKING AT THE STARS!

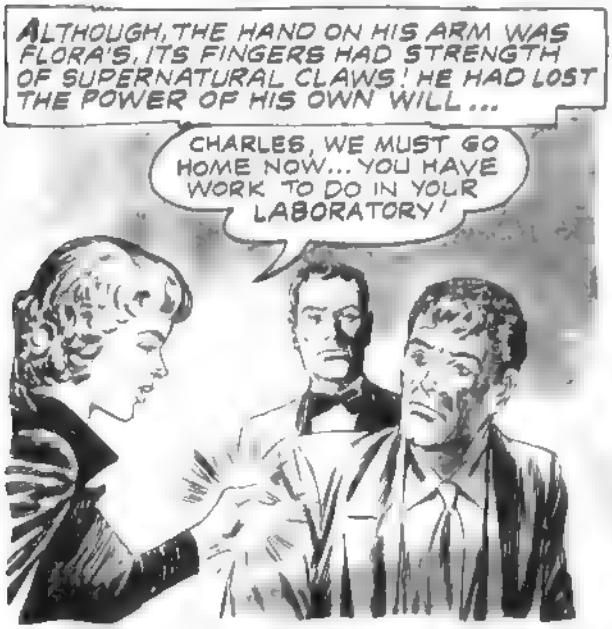
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR FLORA..SHE HASN'T BEEN IN TONIGHT
I'M THROUGH WITH STARGAZING...AND YOU'LL HAVE TO GET USED TO NOT SEEING FLORA, SHE WALKED OUT ON ME TONIGHT...SAID SHE WAS GOING HOME! SO HOW ABOUT EVERYBODY HAVING A DRINK WITH ME!

NOW THAT FLORA'S LEFT YOU, MAYBE I'LL TAKE A TRY AT PRYING YOU AWAY FROM YOUR TELESCOPE!
I NEVER WANT TO SEE A TELESCOPE AGAIN! I'M THROUGH WITH EXPERIMENTS!
HEY! YOUR WIFE MUST'VE CHANGED HER MIND ABOUT LEAVING YOU! THERE SHE IS!

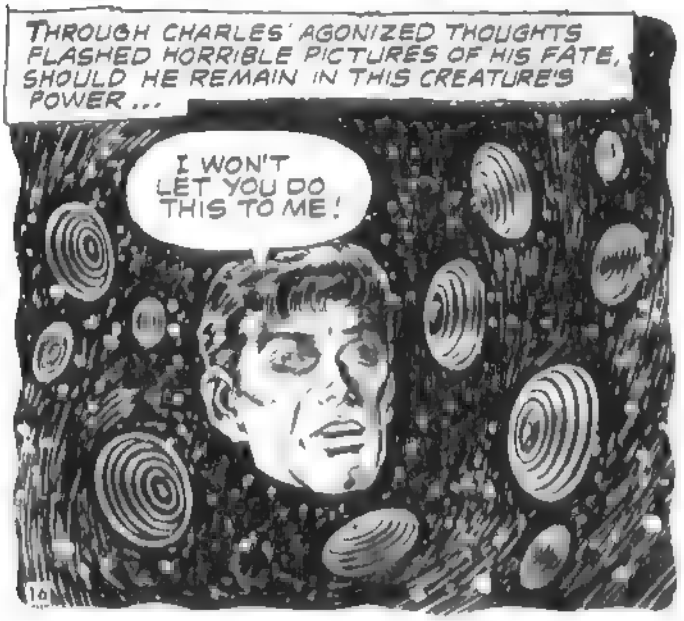
FLORA! IT--IT IS FLORA!
MY MISTAKE! SO LONG PROF! I'LL BE SEEIN YOU AROUND!


AS THE FIGURE OF HIS WIFE WALKED TO HIM, CHARLES WAS FILLED WITH TERROR!
B-BUT, IT CAN'T BE FLORA! SHE'S DEAD! OH-H! MY HEAD! THAT PARALYSING FEELING AGAIN... AS THOUGH MY BRAIN WAS BEING DRAGGED OUT OF MY SKULL!

AND THOSE EYES! THEY AREN'T FLORA'S EYES... THEY BELONG TO THE THING!
DEAR CHARLES! DID YOU REALLY THINK I COULD LEAVE YOU?


ALTHOUGH, THE HAND ON HIS ARM WAS FLORA'S, ITS FINGERS HAD STRENGTH OF SUPERNATURAL CLAWS! HE HAD LOST THE POWER OF HIS OWN WILL...
CHARLES, WE MUST GO HOME NOW... YOU HAVE WORK TO DO IN YOUR LABORATORY!

YOU AREN'T FLORA... YOU--YOU'RE THE THING IN FLORA'S BODY!
HOW CLEVER OF YOU TO FIGURE THAT OUT, CHARLES! HOW FORTUNATE THAT THE FIRST EARTH BRAIN WE'LL TAKE APART TO STUDY WILL BE A BRILLIANT ONE LIKE YOURS!


THROUGH CHARLES' AGONIZED THOUGHTS FLASHED HORRIBLE PICTURES OF HIS FATE, SHOULD HE REMAIN IN THIS CREATURE'S POWER...
I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS TO ME!

FROM NOW ON YOU'LL DO AS I TELL YOU! AND WHEN I LEAVE THIS EARTH, YOU WILL GO WITH ME!
THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY OUT OF THIS FOR ME!

CHARLES WAS UNABLE TO THROW OFF THE CREATURE'S HYPNOTIC SPELL.

THE IDEA OF TAKING OVER FLORA'S BODY TO PROLONG MY TIME ON EARTH CAME FROM YOUR OWN THOUGHTS, WHEN YOU WERE PLANNING ON HOW YOU MUST BURY HER AS SOON AS YOU GOT RID OF ME.

WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD IMPRISON ME IN YOUR LAB, YOU WERE WRONG! NOTHING ON EARTH CAN CONFINE ME SINCE I HAVE THE ABILITY TO EXPAND, CONTRACT OR VAPORIZE!

WHEN I FOLLOWED YOU I COULD HAVE DRAGGED YOU BACK HERE BUT THEN I REALIZED THAT WITH THE SOUL GONE FROM THIS BODY I COULD ENTER IT AND FUNCTION AS A HUMAN BEING AS LONG AS I NEEDED TO STAY ON EARTH!

SO YOU AIDED MY PLANS BY HAVING A BODY ALL READY FOR ME TO STEP INTO! NOW, IF WE DO NOT REBUILD THE MACHINE IN THE TIME REMAINING TO ME IN NATURAL FORM--I AM SAFELY ENCASED IN THE HUMAN FORM YOU PROVIDED FOR ME!

WITH A GREAT EFFORT, CHARLES TRIED TO MAKE HIS BODY COORDINATE...

BUT THE MACHINE MUST BE REBUILT! WE'RE DEPENDENT ON THE BEAM TO GET US BACK AND FORTH TO EARTH! YOU MUST START TO WORK ON IT AT ONCE!

THIS MUST WORK

THIS EXPLOSIVE CHEMICAL WILL DESTROY THE BODY YOU STOLE! DESTROY ME... THE LAB. BUT AT LEAST I DIE QUICKLY ON MY OWN EARTH... AND YOUR EXISTENCE WILL BE OVER AND NOTHING LIKE YOU CAN RETURN TO OVERRUN THE EARTH!

I HAVE FAILED! BUT THERE ARE OTHERS LIKE ME-- AND OUR CHANCE WILL COME AGAIN THROUGH ANOTHER FOOL LIKE THIS ONE!

ON TOP OF SOME SMOLDERING EMBERS WAS A GREEN, SLIMY SUBSTANCE... SOME THOUGHT IT PART OF THE EXPERIMENT THAT HAD CAUSED THE BIG EXPLOSION, BUT SOME SCIENTISTS ARE DOUBTFUL... BECAUSE IT'S LIKE NO SUBSTANCE EVER SEEN ON EARTH.

DEMONS and VAMPIRES
WHAT MYSTERIOUS CREATURES INHABIT THE AIR AROUND US... AND THE EARTH BENEATH OUR FEET? PAT CARTER, ACE GIRL REPORTER HAS A GLIMPSE OF THEM DURING ONE NIGHT OF TERROR--WHEN SHE WATCHES A MAD ARTIST PAINT...
A SERIES OF SHOCKING MURDERS ROCK AN OLD NEW ENGLAND CITY...
FLASH! ANOTHER BLOODLESS BODY WAS JUST FOUND NEAR THE WATERFRONT...
THAT KILLER AIN'T HUMAN... BLOODLESS BODY? BRRR!
DAILY
GHOUL
THIRD
NEWS-HEN PAT CARTER RUSHES TO THE LATEST MURDER SCENE AND FINDS HER FIANCE, DETECTIVE JIM YOUNG ALREADY THERE...
JIM, IS IT?
HI, PAT! YEAH! VICTIM DEAD... DRAINED OF BLOOD... NO CLUES!

IT'S SO HORRIBLE!
THAT MAN WITH THE SATCHEL: I WONDER IF HE HAS ANY CONNECTION?
'BYE NOW, JIM! I HAVE TO GET BACK AND WRITE MY STORY!
HMM-M! IT'S JUST POSSIBLE SHE'S GOT ON TO SOMETHING WE'VE MISSED! I BETTER FOLLOW HER!
TEN MINUTES LATER...
WONDER WHAT SHE'S UP TO?

KNOCK KNOCK

YES? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
SQEEK

I'M--I'M A REPORTER FOR--
A REPORTER, EH? CURIOUS ABOUT MY PICTURES, I SUPPOSE? WELL, I CAN SPARE TEN MINUTES! COME IN
I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS PLACE! IF SHE DOESN'T COME OUT IN TEN MINUTES I'M GOING IN AFTER HER!

MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE HOUSE..
I'VE HEARD PEOPLE ASK HOW YOU GET SUCH LIFE-LIKE FEELING IN YOUR IMAGINARY SUBJECTS... NOW I KNOW WHAT THEY MEAN!
IMAGINARY? WHO'S TO SAY THESE CREATURES DO NOT EXIST!
OH, YOU DON'T BELIEVE...
WHY NOT? LOOK AT THIS ONE! OUR ANCESTORS BELIEVED IN THEM ESPECIALLY HERE IN NEW ENGLAND THE AIR AND EARTH WERE RUMORED TO BE FULL OF OGRES GARGOYLES AND OTHER WEIRD BEINGS!
THE TIME! SORRY, MY DEAR BUT YOU MUST LEAVE PLEASE, IMMEDIATELY!
MR GILMAN I REALLY CAME TO ASK YOUR OPINION, BUT..

AOOOOOOARRRRR
I TOLD YOU TO GO, YOU FOOL!
WHAT WAS T-THAT?
ALRIGHT, I'LL GO!

TOO LATE, MY DEAR! YOU CAME TO LEARN A LITTLE ABOUT ME. NOW YOU WILL LEARN ALL!
HA HA HA
BUT I'D RATHER NOT!
IS HE NUTS? I'LL BE DARNED IF I'LL SCREAM LIKE A SILLY FOOL!
EEK EEK
NOW YOU WILL SEE THINGS YOUR GENERATION HAS NEVER SEEN!
PLEASE... I WANT TO GO!

MR GILMAN... WHY ARE YOU LOCKING THE DOOR?
LOOK AT THAT BRICKED-OVER ARCHWAY! IT USED TO CONNECT WITH ACTUAL TUNNELS AND SEWERS THAT OUR ANCESTORS BELIEVED WERE INHABITED BY DEMONS!
SEE! HA-HA! I HAVE A MOVIE CAMERA TO RECORD THE ACTIONS OF MY MODELS! AND ON THE EASEL IS MY LATEST SUBJECT! NOW ARE YOU BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND?
PLEASE LET ME GO!
CLICK
AND LAST, BUT MOST IMPORTANT...THE BAIT. AH, YES... THE BAIT
THE BLACK BAG THAT'S THAT'S--
RIGHT! IT'S BLOOD, AND NOW TO UNLOCK THE GREAT DOOR AND HA-HA HA-HA!
NOW YOU CAN SEE WHY THE SUBJECTS OF MY PAINTINGS LOOK ALIVE!
YOU'RE RIGHT! THERE'S SOMETHING.. WATCH CLOSELY!
WHAT IS...? THERE'S SOMETHING.
WHY YOU'RE MAD YOU ARE THE KILLER!
AND WE DISCOVER THAT THE ARCHWAY STILL CONNECTS WITH THE ANCIENT TUNNELS!

--BECAUSE THEY ARE ALIVE HA'HA!
IT--IT CAN'T BE REAL!
SO, I PAINT FROM LIFE WHILE THE CAMERA RECORDS EVERY DETAIL FOR THE FUTURE!
OH, PLEASE! LET ME OUT OF HERE.. PLEASE!
DON'T WORRY MY DEAR! I'M FINISHED WITH THIS MODEL AND I'M GETTING RID OF IT; GET RID OF ALL OF THEM! THAT JAR CONTAINS ENOUGH POISON TO KILL AN ARMY!
IT UNDERSTANDS YOU!
NO! DON'T TOUCH ME! THAT WAS A LIE! THERE WAS NO POISON DON'T!
CRASH
AARRR
SWISH
NO NO
AAAAAAA

AT THAT MOMENT
WELL HER TIME IS UP-- WHAT WAS THAT?
AAA
IT CAME FROM BELOW THERE'S THE STARS-- COME ON!
THE DOOR'S LOCKED I'LL
YAHOO
CRA
WHAT TH HELL WAS THAT? IT WENT INTO THE CAVE!
PAT! PAT! ARE YOU O.K.?
HISSSS
I-I THINK SO!
THIS OUGHT TO STOP IT!
BLA BLAM
CRASH
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! THIS CAVE IS--
NEXT DAY IN JIM'S OFFICE.
JIM! I SAW IT! IT WAS REAL!
AW, BABY, YOU HAD A NIGHTMARE OR MAYBE G-MAN HYPNOTIZED YOU!
WELL, HERE'S THE FILM FROM G-MAN'S CAMERA! LET'S RUN IT OFF!
LET'S SEE IT!
YOU'LL SEE

IT--IT'S REAL! WOW-W! FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER WAS A PIKER COMPARED TO THAT!
THIS IS WHERE THE MONSTER UNDERSTOOD ABOUT THE POISON!
GOOD LORD! LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING TO GILMAN...
OH NO! NO!
EEEEAAAA
OH, PETE... TURN IT OFF!
NOT A WORD OF THIS MUST LEAK OUT. I'LL REPORT IT TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES... BUT THE GENERAL PUBLIC MUST NEVER KNOW! WE'D HAVE A PANIC IN NO TIME!
I UNDERSTAND, JIM! I PROMISE... NO STORIES...
CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW PEOPLE WOULD FEEL IF THEY KNEW WHAT MONSTROSITIES INHABIT THE VERY EARTH UNDER THEIR FEET?
I KNOW HOW THEY'D FEEL... BECAUSE I'M GOING TO FEEL THAT WAY FROM NOW ON!
THE END

LOCKED in TIME

Back when science fiction magazines were in their infancy, there were many stories about lone scientistists making terrific and sometimes disastrous discoveries all by themselves in their home laboratories. One of the most popular tales of the times was this memorable story by D. D. Sharp, about a man who discovered an elixir of immortality.

Herbert Zulerich was a big, heavy-framed man with a tangled mop of shaggy hair which lay back from his sloping forehead and clustered about the collar of his dark coat. His nose was big and prominent, swelling like a huge peak upon his face, and his mouth was a deep-lined cleavage between the peak of his nose and the bulge of his chin.

Zulerich's habits were as strange as his face and grotesque as his big body. How he lived no one knew, and no one knew either how he managed to maintain the formidable array of test tubes, and retorts. In his laboratory was every conceivable kind of peculiar glass, holding liquids of all colors.

Zulerich had, at one time, been a chemist of somewhat more than local fame; but of late years he had become a recluse, staying alone most of the time in his big stone house just back of the highway where the constant stream of autos seemed to disturb him but little.

In truth they disturbed him a great deal. Some days he would watch them in their hurry as they drove furiously along the straight line of pavement, away and into the east, would grow gloom and melancholy. And yet his large blue eyes would come to have a look, a feeling of sympathy for those who dashed [illegible] life [illegible] thoughtless.

"Death! Death!" the old man would whisper. "Man goes through long years of preparation for a few days of accomplishment before the conqueror destroys all."

"So much preparation," he would whisper as he shook his big head. "So many brilliant minds polished and blazing for an hour, like roses grown and tended to be cut for an evening's bloom; hands so skillfully trained, and so soon folded quietly at rest."

That he was in quest of some great secret everyone who knew him had long ago suspected. But what that secret was, no one knew and few could even guess.

The truth was that Zulerich's mind was obsessed by a single thought—the appalling waste of death. And since science and invention were conquering the other enemies of man's existence, Zulerich set out after the conquest of Ponce de Leon to discover the elements which might be combined to give eternal life.

Strange as it may seem, Zulerich was making some progress. He had found out some things which had astonished him. Some of his experiments had saved and stupified him; and then he made a discovery which gave him a decided fright.

He had been experimenting with unicellular organisms, and had found that they did not behave as inorganic chemicals did. He knew that the creation of these animalcules was distinctly physiological and not merely physical organic and not purely chemical. They did not resemble any known chemicals, for they reacted as individauls and not as mere materials.

Old Zulerich had studied the microscopic processes of cellular division and multiplication, hoping to penetrate the law of the organism and discover what it was that, at the peak of growth, prevented further cleavage of the cells. In short, he wanted to find the principle which confined the limits of size and growth. Find what it was that caused the cells of a living body to increase and multiply until maturity and then cease growing except when incited by a cut or other accident to the tissue. Why should a cell become active to replace flesh, yet balk at rebuilding vital tissues, such as the lungs, or refuse to replace a lost tooth more than once?

He experimented in numerous ways to provoke cell growth, trying to determine whether they had individualities of their own or whether they were bounded by the individuality of the whole. He wanted to find whether cells had an intelligence which caused them to do the remarkable things necessary in their coordination in the body.

Zulerich found out many things, stupendous, mystifying things, which no amount of scientific theory could possible explain. He perfected chemicals which applied to a rabbit's head caused its hair to grow so long as to make it necessary for him to gather it into a bag. And even then the weight of it grew so great the rabbit could no longer drag its load and he killed the animal out of mercy. But its hair grew and grew. His high-walled backyard soon held some monstrous freaks from his chemicals; dogs with legs as big as wazy barrels and bodies of normal size, and rats with bodies as big as cows and small pea-nut-sized heads. And one day he applied a chemical to a horse's eye and the eyes grew out of their sockets like long ropes of white snow with great knobs of gelatine-like iris — limp flabby ropes which dragged upon the ground. The effect of this last experiment — yet, the kind soul of Zulerich that he killed the monstrosities and wished to abandon the whole business. Then he would look again from his window over the wide world where death laid waste, and he would sigh and tighten his lips as he plunged ahead again.

Growth was not what Zulerich wanted. He was quite content that man should retain his present stature. What he desired was to increase man's years.

And then he discovered it. He did not need to prove the experiment by waiting and watching until the end of time to find out whether the cells would eventually die. He knew they would not die. A few drops of pale green fluid in the graduating glass in his hand would permit any man to live eternally. He knew this was possible for he had at last found the combination he sought; the chemical which continued life without the necessity of decay.

After a year of experiments upon his cells he tried a drop upon a rat. He caught the rat in one hand and held his medicine dropper with its pale green fluid in the other. But, as the dropper released its globule, the rat moved its head and the drop hit the side of its face and spread above its throat. It left a scar upon the throat, a peculiar scar like a question mark. Zulerich tried again with a second drop with better success. The rat swallowed it.

Zulerich watched carefully. The animal's heart seemed to cease beating. The lungs became motionless, and yet the rat lived, with a fire in its pink eyes. It lived on, day by day, week after week, month on month, without the slightest loss of weight or sign of hunger or thirst. It lived with its tiny soul imprisoned in it.

Yet even then Zulerich dared not think his elixir, though his work was exhausting his strength and his heart was very weak and with its flutterings gave him fright at times. There was

a flaw in his experiment. The animal lived without breath, food or water, but it was entirely *unable to move*. To me it one would presume it dead except for the fire in its fierce little eyes and its lack of decay.

So Zulerich set out to mend the flaw. He worked feverishly now, for he was a very old man and his heart threatened to fail. He did not want to die with success just within his reach. He did not want to come so near offering mankind the one boon it craved and then to fail.

Two years passed before Zulerich found the ingredient lacking in his pale greenish drops. The thing was so simple he had overlooked it altogether. He discovered it quite by accident.

One day he had a pail containing a solution of washing soda near the window and was washing down the dusty glass so that he might see out over the blighted world and gain strength from its curse to continue his work. He would allow no one else in his laboratory and washed the windows himself.

A few spattering drops fell into the motionless upturned mouth of the rat where it stood upon the deep entrement. Its mouth was open in the same position Zulerich had left it when he had forced it to receive the life preserving drops. It had stood in that paralyzed, living statue in that same attitude for two long years. Zulerich had really thought to remove the animal from the window before beginning to wash them. But as he grew older he had grown more absent minded. He was unable to use the same care and forethought he once had; but this time his carelessness resulted in a great discovery.

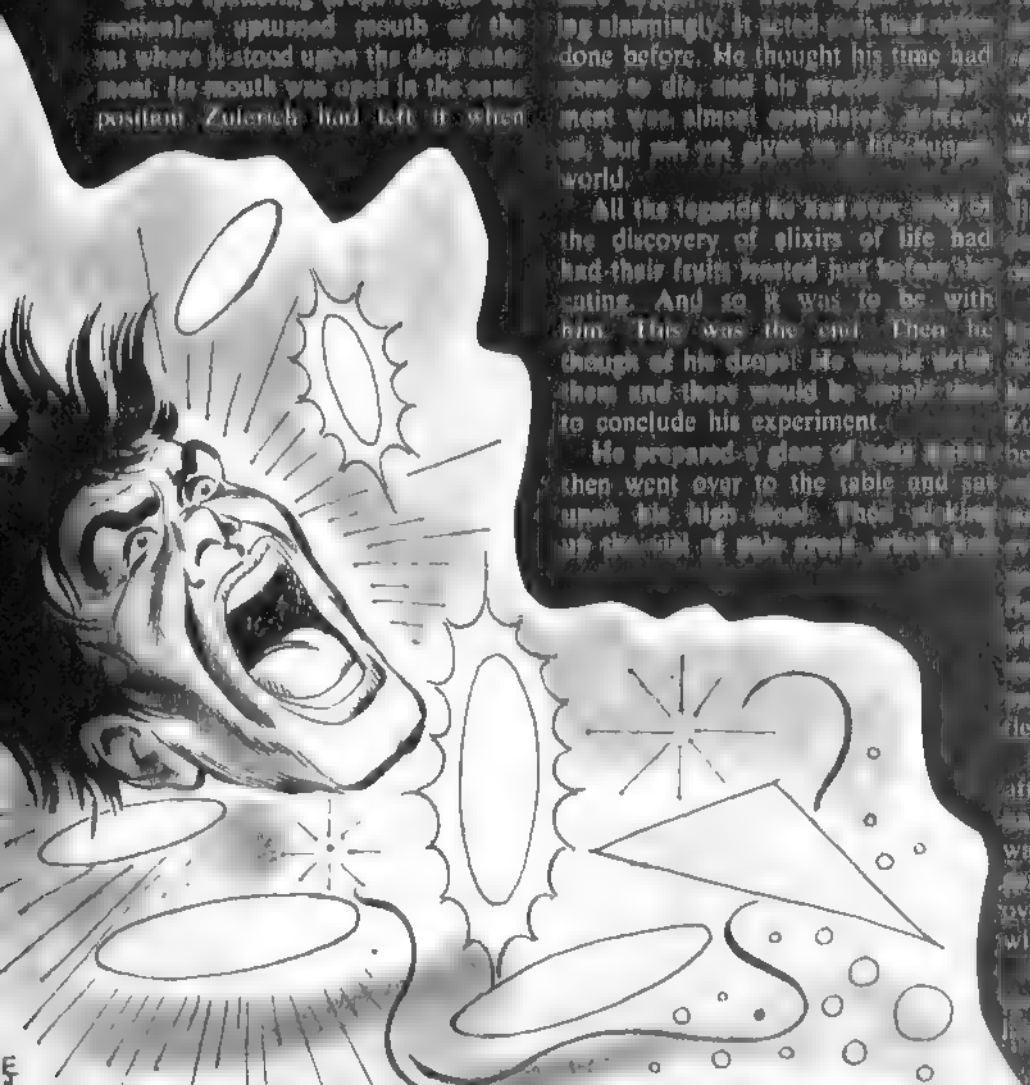
Immediately when the soda dropped into the rat's mouth it squealed and squirmed for cover. But it soon came out to nibble a crust of crackers the servant had dropped on the floor.

Zulerich was [illegible] the rat regaining the use of its muscles, but now he became worried and anxious because it developed that perhaps this might foreboding deep, [illegible] meant death.

Even as he pondered [illegible] that he knew he was [illegible] not much time to watch and wait. And then as the result of his surprise and relief over the new discovery of the soda drops, his mind began [illegible] ing alarmingly. It acted as it had [illegible] done before. He thought his time had come to die, and his [illegible] ment was almost complete. [illegible] but not yet given up [illegible] world.

All the legends he had [illegible] of the discovery of elixirs of life had had their fruits tested just before [illegible] cating. And so it was to be with him. This was the end. Then he thought of his drops. He would [illegible] then and there would be simple [illegible] to conclude his experiment.

He prepared a glass of [illegible] then went over to the table and sat upon his high stool. Then [illegible] up the vial of pale green [illegible]



[illegible] But his hand trembled so that the vial [illegible] touch of his hand.

He [illegible] ten he would be unable to hand the soda to his mouth. For the moment [illegible]

A week went by.

During [illegible] over the room. One time it came out [illegible] not breathing.

[illegible] time the rat became bolder and Zulerich had much time to observe it. He [illegible] which of course was a method of [illegible] beside his chemical. Zulerich tried to [illegible] fled the room.

Zulerich created quite a sensation after that. No one knew what had [illegible] was dead, and surmised that he had [illegible] over him which had embalmed him with the look of life in his eyes.

among the ruins of the Scottish [illegible] years passed, and still old Zulerich was not buried because they believed he had found some marvelous embalming fluid and he was kept for observation.

Old Zulerich, growing no older, knew all this for he sat there, in a glass case now, and heard all they said and saw before his eyes all that happened.

And in the long, long night, he, with its selfishness and its eternal life and the unselfish chemist in his glass case, would meet again. The rat would scamper lively across the top of the glass case, in which Zulerich sat as stiffly as though sculptured in stone. It would sit upon the table before him and stare at him with malicious eyes, and then scamper away. And Zulerich always knew it by the peculiar scar upon its neck. The rat knew what he lacked. For two long years it had been frozen, as he was now, before he had given it immortality as well as life. But it was too late for so great a deed to a man. It hated him. It never brought him the few drops of alkali he craved.

One day they packed Zulerich carefully in a case and moved him, and when the case was opened he found himself in a lofty building with the mummy of a Pharaoh on one side of him and musty relics of other ages all around him. He recognized the old building, for in the other days he had loved to poke around there, and in his fancies wander and his thoughts seek something tangible in these fragments of a vanished age.

As he sat there upon his stand, protected within his glass case, the unalterable line of his vision vaulted the narrow aisles below him and gazed through the great glass and iron window in the opposite wall.

Out there he watched the throngs that passed. People of a day. Men who yesterday were babies in mother's arms, today fighting up the long and difficult ladder for their fragment of success, to leap tomorrow into oblivion of their alloted span.

Customs changed, women became [illegible] with the male, and there became even less time or inclination to enjoy the fruits of preparation. The years of training lengthened.

In all their years upon Earth, it was found to happen that the rat should never again [illegible] with his unselfish dream. The rat had been stoking him so that it might glout over him as it used to do. So that it might scamper upon his case and deride him with its motion. But the keeper of the museum saw the rat and beat it with his broom and mangled it with his feather-shod hoof. This happened in the night and he left the rat upon the floor until morning so that the cleaner might take it away.

Before the cleaners came the next morning one of the scientists who were studying Zulerich saw the rat lying there upon the floor before the case with its mangled body and its eyes were so bright and full of pain. He stooped to examine it, and his interest became intense, for its heart and lungs were quiet and it seemed quite dead, and yet its eyes had the same living look of the man Zulerich in the glass case.

So the rat, too, was placed under observation and set in a tiny case upon a perch just before the case in which sat old Zulerich looking out upon the great world through the big window. The rat is in one case and off part of the vision of the chemist so that in looking the world beyond the window he must look straight into the eyes of the creature to whom he had given eternal life, and which had been mangled until it was given eternal pain.

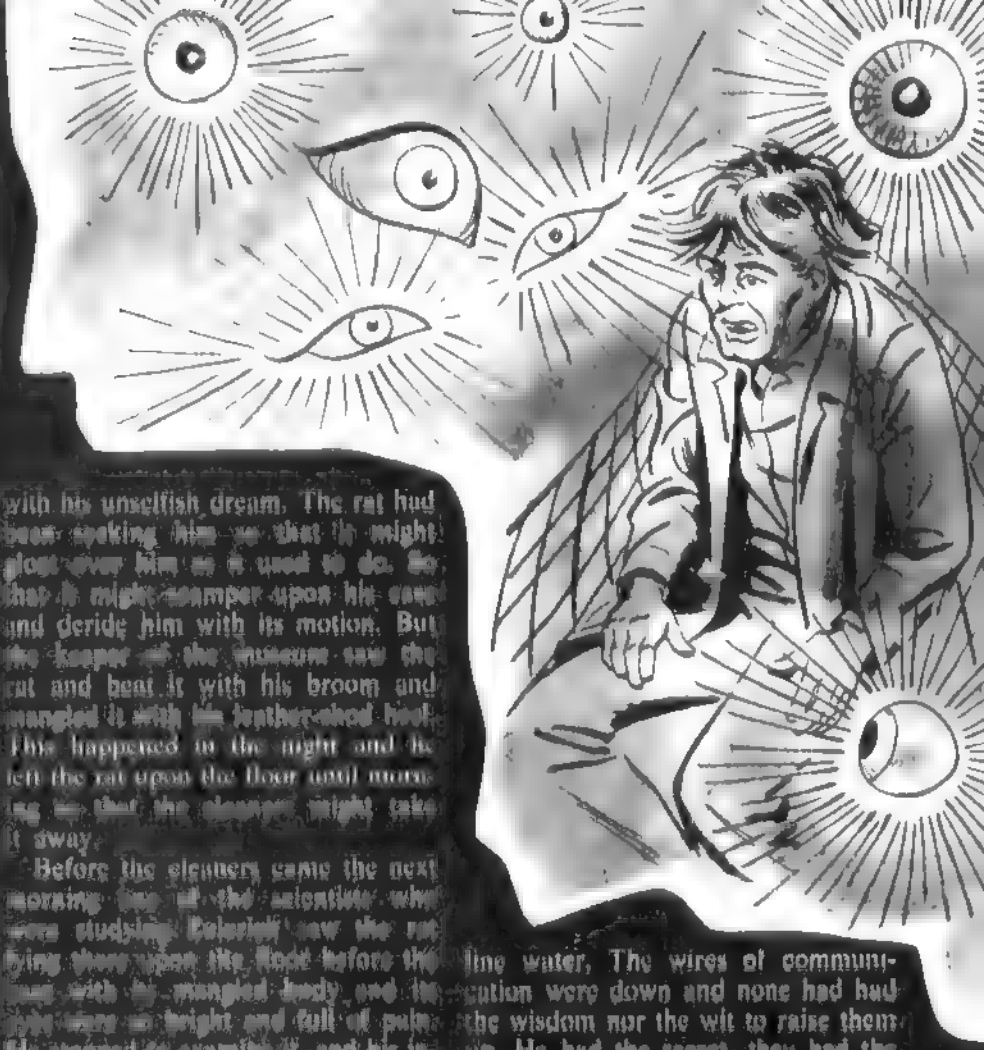
The years passed on, long years, all the longer that there should be no end of them. It was all the sadder that instead of viewing the misery and waste of eighty years, he must watch it for eight hundred years, and even then not be done.

Life streamed by under his gaze, bursting up with decay. Yet he held the secret they so much desired. Between them and eternal life was a [illegible] drop of alkaline water. The wires of communication were down and none had had the wisdom nor the wit to raise them up. He had the secret, they had the power, if they only knew.

Eager, anxious, weary, discouraged and broken, the people of the world tramped by, torrents of wasted motion. For long years he envied them, of all that waste, the power to say one small word for freedom. For long years the undying man and the undying rat stared hatefully at each other. For long years he studied and contrived within his mind some means for breaking the paralysis of his body so that he might give eternal life to humanity. Then he learned a great lesson from a small child.

The child discovered the mangled rat and had seen the pain and desire of death in its eyes. She begged her father to kill the little rat as he had killed her little dog after it had mangled it.

That night Zulerich's eyes softened as he regarded the rat under the bright glow of the electric lights, and in his heart felt remorse. For the first time he was glad that he had not been able to give man his magic formula. He discovered that he should need to improve life before trying to lengthen it. ●



BURKE WAS A POLICEMAN .. AND WE MIGHT ADD, A DARNED GOOD ONE! THE ONLY TROUBLE WITH BURKE WAS HE BELIEVED ONLY HALF OF WHAT HE SAW AND NOTHING HE HEARD... THAT'S WHY THEY CALLED HIM...

the MAN WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE

THIS IS MAC, A SUBWAY TRACK WALKER AND REPAIR MAN FOR THE SUBWAY OF THE SPRAWLING CITY..
WHAT'S THIS? A HOLE? MUST HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE HEAVY RAINS LAST MONTH
I'D BETTER CHECK THIS OUT ... WHAT AN ODD TUNNEL... NEVER SAW ONE LIKE THIS BEFORE IN THE SUBWAY.. MUST BE AN OLD LINE
..WAIT 'TILL I TELL MY SUPERVISOR ABOUT THIS! .. SURE IS DARK HERE!
..THEY TOLD ME TO REPORT ALL WALL BREAKS! WELL... I'LL BE.. THERE'S A LIGHT UP AHEAD!
...ONLY A GLOW COMING FROM THAT PILE.. LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING FROM OUTER SPACE OR A RUSSIAN PLOT OF SOME KIND
ULP!
I SEE IT.. BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

AS MAC MOVES TOWARD THE ENTRANCE ONE OF THE ANTS BLOCKS IT. MAC'S HEART SKIPS A BEAT AND SINKS TO THE FLOOR...

MAC CREPT FREE OF THE ANT TUNNEL AND RACED BACK TO BURKE AT THE SUBWAY ENTRANCE

SO THE THREE MEN HEADED BACK INTO THE TUNNEL THE OFFICERS WERE WELL ARMED.

THEY GOT HIM! WE'RE TOO LATE!

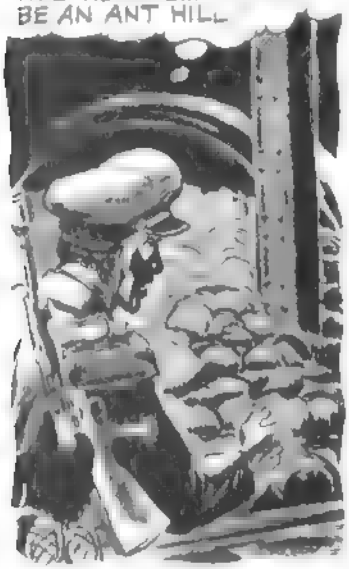
OH, NO! LOOK-- THEY PICKED HIM CLEAN!

...HORRIBLE! ONLY A FEW SECONDS AGO HE--GOOD LORD... HE'S CHANGING INTO A--
WE'RE LUCKY THEY WENT BACK INTO THEIR HOLE

SUDDENLY!
ARWEEEEEEEEEE
HEY, I SEE SOMETHING!

THE GIANT ANTS RUSHED ONTO THE SUBWAY TRACKS AS IF IN A PRE-PLANNED ATTACK!
WHREE
BURKE THEY'RE COMING! BURKE WHERE ARE YOU?

HELP!
WHREEE-EE!



NATURALLY NO ONE BELIEVED BURKE'S STORY BUT THEN WHO WOULD? BUT THOSE STRANGE SOUNDS BEHIND THE SUBWAY WALLS ARE STILL THERE... LISTEN...

The End

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF? BECAUSE EACH ONE OF US FEARS SOME ONE THING MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD. POVERTY DISGRACE DEATH! OR EVEN FEAR ITSELF! BUT WHATEVER YOU FEAR READER COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY THAT YOU ARE NOT IN THE SHOES OF STEVE DOLAN, BECAUSE STEVE WAS AFRAID OF RATS! BIG GRAY RATS WITH LONG WHISKERS AND GLEAMING FANGS. ALL HIS LIFE THEY HAUNTED HIM AND IN THE END— BUT WE'LL LET YOU FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF HOW STEVE FINISHED IN THE RAT RACE...

FEAR HAS A NAME

STEVE WAS REARED IN SQUALOR AND FEAR! AS A CHILD HE ALWAYS KEPT A LARGE STONE BY HIS BED...

THE RATS SENSED THE CHILD'S FEAR AND WERE BOLD...

STEVE GREW UP, BUT THE FEAR OF RATS NEVER LEFT HIM! FINALLY HE GOT HIS SEAMAN'S PAPERS AND...

I'D LIKE TO SHIP ON, SIR! DO YOU HAVE MANY R-RATS ON BOARD?

RATS? ON THIS SHIP? OF COURSE NOT, LAD. SHE'S AS CLEAN AS A WHISTLE! SIGN WITH ME AND YOU'LL NEVER REGRET IT! YOU'LL SEE THE WHOLE WORLD!

BUT STEVE DOES REGRET IT...

RATS! THIS FILTHY RUST POT IS FULL OF THEM! THAT MATE LIED TO ME! GET AWAY, BLAST YOU! I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF YOU!

LOOK AT THEM! THEY K-KNOW! THEY SENSE HOW FRIGHTENED I AM! IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH THEY WERE LAUGHING AT ME!

TERRIFIED BY THE RATS, STEVE JUMPS SHIP AT A PORT IN INDIA...

I MIGHT BE STRANDED HERE FOR A WHILE, BUT ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN THOSE RATS! MAYBE LATER I CAN FIND ANOTHER SHIP — WITHOUT RATS!

FOR DAYS HE EXISTS AS BEST HE CAN! THEN ONE DAY ON THE FAR OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, HE SEES AN ODD-LOOKING TEMPLE...

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE THE INSIDE OF THESE TEMPLES! DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANYBODY AROUND, SO I'LL CHANCE IT! MIGHT EVEN FIND A PLACE TO SLEEP THESE COLD NIGHTS!

AND INSIDE...

HOLY SMOKE! JUST LOOK AT THOSE IDOLS! GOLD AND JEWELS ALL OVER THEM! THERE MUST BE A FORTUNE HERE, AND NOBODY GUARDING THEM! I'VE HEARD ABOUT THINGS LIKE THIS, BUT I NEVER BELIEVED IT UNTIL NOW!

LIKE SO MANY BEFORE HIM, STEVE FEELS ENVY AND GREED GNAWING AT HIM...
WHY NOT? WHY SHOULD THEY HAVE ALL THIS WHILE I'M STARVING? I COULD TAKE JUST A FEW OF THESE JEWELS, ENOUGH TO GET ME BACK TO THE STATES IN LUXURY, AND WHO-EVER OWNS THIS PLACE WOULD NEVER MISS THEM!
AND SUCCUMBS...
BOY! A FEW OF THESE RUBIES AND EMERALDS AND I'LL BE FIXED FOR LIFE! MIGHT AS WELL TAKE ALL I CAN CARRY WHILE I'M AT IT! BUT I BETTER HURRY BEFORE SOME OF THE PRIESTS SHOW UP!
SUDDENLY, OUT OF NOWHERE, ROBED FIGURES SPRING AT HIM...
AAAHHHHHH— LEMME GO!
WE MUST TAKE HIM TO OUR MASTER! HE COMMITS SACRILEGE!
FOREIGN DEVIL! YOU DARE DEFILE OUR TEMPLE!
I SAY KILL HIM NOW!
STEVE IS TAKEN TO ANOTHER ROOM AND ANOTHER IDOL...
YOU ARE GUILTY OF A GREAT SIN, STRANGER! WHY SHOULD YOU NOT DIE?
YIIIIII— THE IDOL CAN TALK! G-GOING TO HAVE ME KILLED!
PLEASE! I DIDN'T MEAN ANY HARM, HONEST! I'LL GIVE YOU BACK THE STUFF! ONLY DON'T— (GASP)— K-KILL ME!
IT IS NOT THE VALUE OF THE JEWELS THAT MATTERS, POOR FOOL! YOUR SIN IS GRAVER THAN THAT, MUCH GRAVER! YOU, AN INFIDEL, HAVE BEFOULED OUR TEMPLE!
DEATH IS TOO QUICK, TOO EASY FOR YOU! YOUR PUNISHMENT SHALL BE LONG AND PAINFUL, ACCORDING TO YOUR NATURE! AND MY ANCIENT WISDOM TELLS ME WHAT IT IS THAT YOU FEAR MOST! RATS!
AHHHEEEEE— NO! N-NOT THAT! DON'T EVEN MENTION RATS!
YES! KONGI, THE RAT GOD SHALL FOLLOW YOU FOR ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE! NEVER STOP RUNNING, FOR THEN HE WILL OVERTAKE AND DEVOUR YOU! THAT IS YOUR TERRIBLE PUNISH-MENT! NOW GO!

STEVE IS RELEASED BY THE PRIESTS AND RUNS FOR HIS LIFE...

I — I DON'T BELIEVE IN THAT STUFF, BUT I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES! KONGI, THE RAT GOD! UGH! I'LL FIND A SHIP, ANY SHIP, AND GET OUT OF HERE TODAY!

BUT HE FINDS NO BERTH THAT DAY! WHEN IT GETS DARK, HE GOES TO A CHEAP FLOP-HOUSE...

ALL THOSE SHIPS IN THE HARBOR AND NOT A SINGLE BLASTED ONE OF THEM NEEDED A MAN! WELL, MAYBE TOMORROW! B-BUT I WISH I COULD FORGET ABOUT THAT IDOL AND THE CURSE! EVEN IF THERE AIN'T ANY SUCH THING! HMMM- WONDER HOW HE KNEW I HATE RATS SO MUCH?

LATER, IN THE DARKNESS, STEVE IS AWAKENED BY A WEIRD SOUND. HE LOOKS — AND STARTS TO SCREAM...

YAAAEEEEEE — A RAT! GAAAA — IT'S AFTER ME! THE C-CURSE! IT'S KONGI, THE RAT GOD!

STOP IT! YAAAAA — HELP! DON'T LET IT GET ME! PLEASE — PLEASE! SOMEBODY KILL IT!

WHAT AILS THE AMERICAN?

ALL FOREIGNERS ARE MAD!

HE SEES SOMETHING TERRIBLE — BUT WHAT?

LATER...

CAN'T YOU — (SOB) — SEE IT? IT'S AFTER ME, G-GOING TO KILL ME! PLEASE DO SOMETHING! SHOOT IT! I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF IT — AAAAAAAA —

YOU HAVE HAD TOO MUCH WINE, SIR! PERHAPS IF YOU WERE TO SLEEP FOR A TIME...

ONLY THEN DOES STEVE REALIZE THAT ONLY HE SEES THE RAT...

OWWWWW — COMING AFTER ME! AND THEY CAN'T SEE IT, THEY DON'T BELIEVE ME! AND THE PRIEST — (GROAN) — SAID IT WOULD FOLLOW ME FOR THE R-REST OF MY LIFE! YEEEE — I'LL GO C-CRAZY!

SOMEHOW STEVE FINDS HIMSELF AT THE TEMPLE AGAIN...
I'VE GOT TO SEE THAT IDOL, THE PRIESTS, BEG FOR MERCY! I'LL MAKE THEM KILL ME! ANYTHING, ANYTHING AT ALL IS B-BETTER THAN THE RAT! HELP—HELP!
HELP ME, FOR THE LOVE OF HEAVEN! THE RAT—AFTER ME! D-DON'T LET IT GET ME! NOT THAT, I BEG YOU! IF YOU WON'T HELP ME, THEN KILL ME! KILL ME NOW, THIS MINUTE! AHHHEEE— I'M GOING C-CRAZY!
YOU SUFFER MUCH STRANGER. THERE IS PITY IN OUR HEARTS FOR YOU DESPITE YOUR SIN BUT I CANNOT UNDO THE CURSE OF THE RAT GOD! HOWEVER THERE IS A WAY OF KEEPING HIM AT A DISTANCE. GO AND MY PRIEST WILL SHOW YOU. HURRY.
MOMENTS LATER...
HURRY, MAN! THE RAT IS AFTER ME! THEY SAID YOU WOULD G-GIVE ME SOMETHING TO KEEP HIM AWAY!
YES! THIS PRAYER WHEEL! EACH TIME YOU SPIN IT YOU SAY A THOUSAND PRAYERS! KEEP SPINNING IT AND KONGI CANNOT HARM YOU!
SOON...
I DON'T SEE THE R-RAT NOW! MAYBE IT KNOWS ABOUT THE PRAYER WHEEL, KNOWS IT CAN'T HURT ME! M-MAYBE IT HAS GIVEN UP!
THEN HE LOOKS BEHIND HIM, AND A CHILL OF TERROR DARTS THROUGH HIM...
EEEEEYYAAAAAA— IT'S THE RAT! EEEEEAAAAAAA—
SQUEEE-RRRREEEE—
HE REMEMBERS JUST IN TIME AND SPINS THE PRAYER WHEEL...
IT W-WORKS! OH, THANK GOODNESS IT WORKS! THE RAT—F-FADING, GOING! AS LONG AS I SPIN THIS WHEEL, I'LL BE SAFE!

STEVE APPEALS TO THE AMERICAN CONSUL AND IS SENT HOME BY A/R...
THEY THINK I'M CRAZY, BUT LET THEM! AS LONG AS I KEEP SPINNING THIS THING, I CAN'T SEE THE RAT! AND I'M GOING TO SPIN IT THE REST OF MY LIFE!

AND BACK IN NEW YORK HE BECOMES A FAMILIAR SIGHT...
I'VE SEEN NUTS IN MY TIME, BUT THAT GUY BEATS THEM ALL!
I WONDER WHY HE SPINS THAT GADGET ALL THE TIME?
IF THEY ONLY KNEW! BUT I DON'T CARE—I HAVEN'T SEEN THE RAT GOD SINCE I'VE BEEN BACK IN THE STATES!

THEN ONE DAY THE INEVITABLE HAPPENS...
HEY! LOOK OUT, YOU FOOL!
MAYBE I LEFT THE RAT ON THE OTHER SIDE! I HOPE THAT...
GAAAAAA—

HOURS LATER HE AWAKENS IN A STRANGE ROOM...
HUH! WHERE—WHAT HAPPENED? OH, I REMEMBER NOW! B-BUT WHERE IS MY PRAYER WHEEL? DON'T THEY KNOW I MUST HAVE THAT? NURSE! HELP, NURSE! QUICK!

SOMEONE COMING NOW, THANK GOODNESS! THEY MUST HAVE THE PRAYER WHEEL WITH MY OTHER THINGS!
COME IN, NURSE! I'VE GOT TO...

THERE IS ONLY TIME FOR ONE LAST SCREAM...
KONG!
EEEEEYYYAAAAAA—
The End

SO... YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS ?? WELL, NEITHER DO A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE! PAUL REYNARD WAS A NON-BELIEVER... UNTIL HE MET...

THE WALKING DEAD

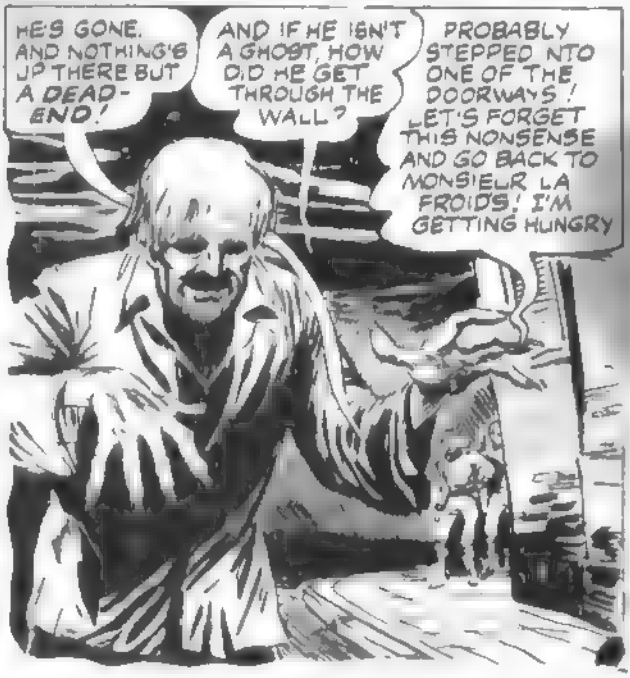
STEALING THROUGH THE POLICE LINES THE BOYS WAIT..
MY PAPA SAYS TO STAY AWAY FROM THE ALLEY WHEN THE CLOCK STRIKES EIGHT
BAH! YOUR PAPA IS A BIG FOOL TO BELIEVE THAT THE GHOST REALLY EXISTS
THEN HOW COME THE POLICE ARE HERE? IF YOU'RE SO SMART PAUL ANSWER THAT!

THEY'RE HERE TO STOP PEOPLE LIKE YOU FROM GETTING FRIGHTENED IF IT WERE REALLY TRUE WHERE IS YOUR GHOST? IT'S EIGHT O'CLOCK ALREADY
THE GHOST SHOULD BE HERE ANY SECOND
QUIET YOU TWO.. AND WATCH THAT DOOR
RUE DE MORTE

THERE HE IS
BAH! IT'S JUST AN OLD DRUNK WHO LIVES IN THAT HOUSE! THROW THINGS AT HIM AND WE'LL SEE IF IT'S A GHOST!
JUST AS THE LEGEND SAYS EVERY NIGHT AT EIGHT THE GHOST WILL APPEAR AND WALK THE RUE DE MORTE!

THERE! DID YOU SEE THAT ONE HIT!
NONSENSE! YOU DIDN'T EVEN COME CLOSE TO HIM
BUT I HIT HIM, TOO! THEY GO RIGHT THROUGH HIM, THOUGH!
RUE DE MORTE

AND I SAY HE IS A GHOST THOSE STONES WENT RIGHT THROUGH HIM
AND I SAY THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GHOST! IF HE'S A GHOST WHY DOES HE DO NOTHING BUT WALK UP AND DOWN THIS ALLEY?
I DON'T KNOW WHO'S RIGHT BUT LOOK...!


HE'S GONE. AND NOTHING'S UP THERE BUT A DEAD-END!
AND IF HE ISN'T A GHOST, HOW DID HE GET THROUGH THE WALL?
PROBABLY STEPPED INTO ONE OF THE DOORWAYS! LET'S FORGET THIS NONSENSE AND GO BACK TO MONSIEUR LA FROIDS! I'M GETTING HUNGRY

THE YEARS PASSED QUICKLY, AND AS IS THE WAY WITH MOST CHILDHOOD FRIENDSHIPS, THE TRIO SPLIT UP AND WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS! REALIZING THAT HIS CHANCES FOR SUCCESS WERE LIMITED IN THE SLUMS, PAUL REYNARD TURNED TO THE OTHER PARTS OF THE CITY! FATE WAS GOOD TO PAUL AND THE RUFFIAN FROM THE SLUMS CHANGED INTO A SUCCESSFUL, YOUNG BUSINESS MAN!
PAUL OCCASIONALLY RETURNED TO THE SCENE OF HIS CHILDHOOD
... AND HERE'S WHERE WE USED TO STEAL COOKIES FROM MONSIEUR LA FROID AH! THOSE WERE THE GOOD OLD DAYS
ALMOST EIGHT O'CLOCK! HMM-- ABOUT TIME FOR THE GHOST OF RUE DE MORTE TO MAKE HIS ENTRANCE. NEVER DID FIND OUT IF THAT STORY WAS TRUE. BUT THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT TO FIND OUT!
PLACE HASN'T CHANGED MUCH... A LITTLE DIRTIER... THERE'S THAT DOORWAY... WELL, I'LL STICK AROUND 'TIL EIGHT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS
BUT AT THAT INSTANT...
WHAT THE
GET HIM, JEAN.. HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S CARRYING PLENTY OF FRANCS!
.. TO SHARE WITH US... HA HIT HIM!
IT IS JUST AS I SAID. THE WALLET IS FULL!
JEAN! PHILLIPE! MY TWO OLD FRIENDS!
LOOK! HE'S PAUL REYNARD! AND HE HAS RECOGNIZED US. HE'LL REPORT US. THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T! LIKE THIS...
THERE! THAT TAKES CARE OF HIM-- HE WON'T REPORT US TO ANYONE NOW...
JEAN! JEAN! OHH-HH... NOO-O

HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN LYING HERE? IT SEEMS LIKE HOURS.. AND WHY CAN'T I GET UP?-- I CAN'T RAISE MYSELF!

EIGHT O'CLOCK---TIME FOR THE GHOST! NOW IS THE CHANCE TO SEE IF THERE S SUCH A THING..IF HE REALLY EXISTS HE CAN HELP ME.

THERE HE IS! HELP ME! HELP! DON'T YOU SEE ME?

HERE, LET ME HELP YOU!
OH THANK YOU...THANK YOU! I KNEW YOU'D HELP ME I JUST KNEW IT!

NOW I KNOW YOU'RE A FAKE...THERE S NO SUCH THING AS THE GHOST OF RUE DE MORTE! WHEN YOU HELPED ME TO MY FEET, I FELT YOU WERE JUST LIKE ME...
LIKE YOU? YES...I SUPPOSE I AM, BUT THAT DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU MEAN! LOOK!

THAT'S ME! BUT IT CAN'T BE..I'M HERE ALONGSIDE YOU!
YES, SON, ALONGSIDE ME---BUT AS THE NEW GHOST OF THE RUE DE MORTE!
THE END

The DEVIL'S FIDDLE

YOU KNOW YOU REALLY DON'T PLAY TOO WELL TONIGHT

IF ONLY I HAD A STRADIVARIUS, THE WORLD WOULD HEAR MUSIC IT HAD NEVER HEARD BEFORE!

WHO WOULD EVER DREAM THAT THE DROPPING OF A COIN INTO A CUP WOULD BE A PRELUDE TO HORROR... BUT IT WAS...

HERE'S A COIN, OLD MAN.. YOU HAVE ABOUT AS LARGE AN AUDIENCE AS I HAD TONIGHT.

THANK YOU SIR!

THE TWO MEN WERE ABOUT TO GO INTO THE INN WHEN THE OLD BEGGAR SPOKE WORDS THAT STOPPED ANTONIO DEAD IN HIS TRACKS...

SO YOU WOULD LIKE TO OWN A STRADIVARIUS EH?

WH-WHAT? H-HOW DID YOU KNOW?

I KNOW MANY THINGS.. I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN GET ONE IF YOU WOULD COME WITH ME TO MY COTTAGE

YES... YES! I'LL COME!

THE OLD BEGGAR LED THEM BACK THROUGH DARK, WINDING STREETS... EACH STEP FILLED MONTI'S HEART WITH INCREASING FEAR...

ULRICO... THERE'S SOMETHING.. SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THIS! LET'S TURN BACK!

DON'T BE A FOOL! MAYBE HE *DOES* KNOW WHERE TO GET A STRADIVARIUS! IF NOT... WHAT HARM IS DONE?

AND AT LAST THEY REACHED A DESERTED COTTAGE.

HERE IT IS COME IN PLEASE

THE AIR INSIDE THE COTTAGE SEEMED TO BEAR DOWN ON THE TWO MEN WITH AN OPPRESSIVENESS AS IF THEY WERE AT THE BOTTOM OF A GRAVE! IN THAT INSTANT EVEN ANTONIO WOULD HAVE TURNED AND LEFT, EXCEPT FOR ONE THING...

I THINK MAYBE WE'D BETTER..

WAIT! LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT YOU HAVE COME TO SEE!

IT IS A STRAD WH-WHERE DID YOU GET IT?
VERY SIMPLE. I MADE IT FOR ME.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! THE MAKERS OF THESE VIOLINS HAVE BEEN DEAD FOR CENTURIES
NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THOSE WHO KNOW THE SECRETS OF THE POWER OF DARKNESS
I'D GIVE MY SOUL TO OWN A VIOLIN LIKE THIS
AT ANTONIO'S WORDS, THE BLIND BEGGAR WHIRLED AND SPOKE AS THOUGH INTRUDER
THEN PLAY, PLAY THE VIOLIN
NO! I'M CO DON'T
BUT MONTI'S PLEA WENT UNHEEDED AS ANTONIO'S FINGERS MOVED FASTER AND FASTER ON THE STRINGS WHILE HIS BOW PRODUCED SOUNDS THAT ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED IN THE COTTAGE. AND AS HE PLAYED STRANGE AND SHADOWY FIGURES BEGAN TO APPEAR.
BEAUTIFUL! BEAUTIFUL!
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, STOP PLAYING!
STAY AWAY FROM ME
BUT AS MONTI GRABBED THE VIOLIN
LOOK OUT!
HURRY, EVERYTHING'S ON FIRE! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN GRIPPED THE HEARTS OF THE TWO MEN AS THEY RUSHED MADLY AWAY FROM THE BURNING COTTAGE, THEN...
WHAT'S THE TROUBLE?
THE COTTAGE... BURNING.
QUICK... THE OLD MAN.. TRAPPED...
WHERE IS THIS PLACE YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?
I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. IT WAS RIGHT HERE!
THE BLIND BEGGAR LIVED THERE
YES, THE COTTAGE HAD DISAPPEARED... AS THOUGH IT HAD NEVER EXISTED, AND MONT. FOUND HE COULD NO LONGER HOLD THE HORRIBLE THOUGHT WITHIN...
YOU TWO MEN MUST VE HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH TO DRINK THERE NEVER WAS A BEGGAR ON THIS STREET, AND... AS FOR A BURNING COTTAGE, YOU CAN SEE FOR YOURSELF...
BUT, I SWEAR...
ANTONIO... DON'T YOU SEE? THE OLD BEGGAR... YOU SAID YOU WOULD GIVE YOUR SOUL FOR THE STRADIVARIUS WHAT IF HE WERE THE... DEVIL HIMSELF!
I DON'T CARE! I HAVE THE ANSWERS NOW! DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS?
ANTONIO WOULD SAY NO MORE AND THAT NIGHT THEY BOARDED A TRAIN... A GNAWING FEAR OF TERROR YET TO COME PREYED ON MONT'S MIND...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT
I KNOW THE SECRET OF GETTING A STRADIVARIUS! IT MUST HAVE BEEN POURED INTO MY BRAIN WHILE I WAS PLAYING THE BEGGAR'S VIOLIN... NOW WE HAVE TO HURRY!
DON'T YOU GIVE UP THIS MAD IDEA BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE? OR... AT LEAST WON'T YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO DO?
NO MY FRIEND IT'S BETTER THAT YOU DON'T KNOW!

ONCE THEY LEFT THE TRAIN THEY WALKED FOR HOUR AFTER HOUR...
HOW MUCH FURTHER WILL WE HAVE TO WALK ULRICO? MY LEGS ARE GETTING WEAK!
ONCE AROUND THAT TURN AND YOU'LL SEE...

IN THAT CASTLE ARE THE REMAINS OF ONE OF THE UNKNOWN MEMBERS OF THE FAMOUS VIOLINMAKING FAMILY. ONCE WE FIND THEM...
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

LOOKING NEITHER TO LEFT NOR RIGHT... AS THOUGH INSPIRED BY SOME UNSEEN VOICE... ANTONIO LED THE WAY INTO THE CRUMBLING CASTLE...
HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING?
I DO KNOW... AND THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!

HERE IT IS... JUST AS IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE! HELP ME CARRY IT OUT INTO THE MOONLIGHT!
ULRICO... ULRICO... PLEASE STOP THIS MADNESS!

BUT ANTONIO WAS BEYOND THE POWER OF ANY ARGUMENT AND THE TWO MEN CARRIED THEIR GRISLY BURDEN OUT OF THE CASTLE AND INTO THE OPEN, WHERE THE FULL LIGHT OF THE MOON WAS ABLE TO SHINE DOWN UPON IT! THEN, ANTONIO PICKED UP HIS VIOLIN AND BEGAN TO PLAY...
THAT MUSIC, ULRICO... IT SOUNDS EVIL!
LOOK AT THE SKELETON AND YOU'LL SEE HOW EVIL IT IS!

GOOD LORD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING, ULRICO? FLESH IS APPEARING ON ITS BONES!

(CONTINUED ON THE BACK COVER)

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WHEN MONTI FINALLY MANAGED TO RECOVER HIS VISION, WHAT HE SAW WAS ALMOST ENOUGH TO DRIVE HIM OUT OF HIS SENSES...

GOOD LORD! THE SKELETON! ULRICO!

TRYING TO RETAIN HIS SELF CONTROL, MONTI MOVED THE BONES FROM THE BODY OF HIS FRIEND...

ULRICO! IT IS I, YOUR FRIEND!...

I CAN'T SEE! I MUST GO TO GENOA...I HAVE WORK TO DO!

THE JOURNEY TO GENOA WAS A SAD ONE! AT LAST THEY REACHED THE SPOT ANTONIO SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR...

MUST GO TO GENOA... MUST GO...

YES, YES...ULRICO! I WILL TAKE YOU THERE!

ARE YOU SURE YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT?

LEAVE ME HERE! I HAVE WORK TO DO!

ANTONIO STOOD AT THAT ONE SPOT PLAYING HIS VIOLIN, UNTIL...

YOU PLAY VERY WELL!

THAT'S BECAUSE I HAVE A STRADIVARIUS! I CAN GET ONE FOR YOU, TOO!

Y-YOU CAN? OH... I'D GIVE ANYTHING I OWN TO HAVE SUCH A VIOLIN!

GOOD! GOOD! COME WITH ME!

YES...EVIL LIVES ON... AND ANTONIO **DID** HAVE WORK TO DO! A CYCLE OF HORROR ONCE BEGUN, WILL CONTINUE AS LONG AS MEN ARE WILLING TO BARGAIN ALL FOR AN INTENSE DESIRE!

THE END!